USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PAPER

RETHINKING U.S. POLICY TOWARDS BURMA

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ABSTRACT

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This research project examines the history of sanctions policies levied against the Government of Burma (GOB), the effect that these sanctions have had on the military-controlled government, and the impact of these policies on U.S. engagement strategy. It concludes with a proposal for future re-engagement as well as suggestions for engagement tools available to military strategists.

Debating current sanctions policies directed against the junta is not the desired goal, as few argue that they represent more an emotionalism (due to the status of Aung San Suu Kyi and the 1990 junta takeover) than anything else. The intent of this project will instead be to suggest a way ahead for U.S. re-engagement both before, but especially after the departure of Aung San Suu Kyi. Using the examples of sanctions policies towards Pakistan and Indonesia, I will argue that there are opportunities for non-violent military engagement which would serve both to enhance relations with the government while maintaining and even supporting U.S. national security.

RETHINKING U.S. POLICY TOWARDS BURMA

> America must stand firmly for the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law; limits on the absolute power of the state; free speech; freedom of worship; equal justice; respect for women; religious and ethnic tolerance; and respect for private property. -2002 United States National Security Strategy[1]

The United States National Security Strategy of 2002 represents a distinct departure from previous documents in how the United States pursues its national strategy. The Global War on Terrorism defines this document, with fulfillment of its goals necessitating the exercise of all elements of U.S. national power. This strategy was further evidenced in President Bush's *State of the Union 2005* speech, in which he aggressively defended supporting and establishing democratic governments as a prerequisite to future global stability.[2] While pundits would argue that the direction this "post-9/11" national strategy has gone is fraught with unknown danger, there is no denying that the decision to pursue this strategy requires America to be an engaged player in the international environment. Gone are the strategic issues associated with the quest for an economic sphere of influence observed at the turn of the twentieth century, of reluctant internationalism following World War I, or of the polarized conflict commonly referred to as the Cold War. Today's national strategy is much more involved, encompassing the realities of a globalized environment and confronting the challenges associated with achieving worldwide stabilization through economic and political inclusion.

At every point in American history, the nation's national strategy has typically embraced concepts containing a pragmatic vision of its role in the world order, of both a way things are and the way things could be. U.S. national strategy has historically encompassed the middle ground between these two beliefs. It was neither the realism of conflict between early twentieth century colonial powers, nor the deliberate establishment of pro-American democratic governments that propelled U.S. national strategy during the administration of Teddy Roosevelt. Instead it encompassed both, with U.S. national strategy using the diplomatic element to great effect (Venezuelan Affair), as well as the military element as part of its power projection (Great White Fleet). So too was national strategy during the Woodrow Wilson presidency. This period saw not just a strategy of realism reacting to the myopic European imperial view of the world, a view that had contributed to one of the most devastating of world wars, but also a strategy based on the belief that "collective security" could create a new world order (League of Nations) capable of eliminating the reoccurrence of a similar conflict. American national strategy was most evidently "middle ground" during the Cold War era, an era that required presidents from Harry Truman to Ronald Reagan to make realistic decisions permitting support of totalitarian

regimes as part of the idealistic goal associated with ridding the international order of communistic dictatorships.

Today's national security policy reflects a world challenged by globalization, technological advances, and a growing divide between the wealthy and poor, as well as between the free and the disenfranchised. Clearly stated, the goals of the 2002 National Security Strategy are, "…to help make the world not just safer but better. Our goals on the path to progress are clear: political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignity." [3]

One of the many countries feeling the blunt end of the U.S. foreign policy stick is Burma. Current policies by the United States towards Burma are defined based on the effort to bring about both democratic change and improved conditions in the realm of human rights. But how should U.S. national security strategy be implemented when the object of that strategy is reticent to change? In this type of scenario, the options available to the United States are limited by the unilateral nature of its policies as well as by the higher priority of other present day American commitments. Using current policies directed at forcing political change in Burma, this paper seeks to resolve this dilemma.

The paper begins with an historical description of events leading to the current U.S. policy directed towards Burma with an emphasis on the country's importance from a regional strategic perspective. Referencing the National Security Strategy and other documents, an analysis will follow regarding this policy and its strengths and weaknesses at effecting desired change. An alternate course that involves seeking a multi-lateral effort will be considered as will one suggesting modification of current policies that potentially induce change in the country while enhancing U.S. theater security. Finally, recommendations, or "ways", for a policy best suited to achieve positive reform, or "ends", in Burma will be suggested.

Background

An independent country since 1948, Burma has been controlled for most of its history by a military junta, currently referring to itself as the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). While the country is comprised of seven states representing seven major ethnic or religious groups, the base of the SPDC's power resides within the predominantly Burmese/Bhuddist majority. Prior to the outbreak of World War II, Burma had been a British colony. However, unlike many of Great Britain's other colonial possessions, Burma's post-war military leadership, or Burma Independence Army, was trained by the country's Japanese occupation forces.[4] This situation led to an atmosphere of military superiority in the handling of internal political unrest.

With a string of weak civilian administrations immediately following independence, coupled with the challenges associated with multiple insurgencies, control of the daily functioning of the government continued to evolve as a military responsibility.

The post-Independence period saw numerous efforts at civilian governmental control with commensurate attempts at democratic reform. On every occasion, these efforts were punctuated by continued internal conflict leading to military intervention. Coups in 1958, 1962, and 1988 were all conducted following the failure of the civilian government to address perceived developmental ineffectiveness and internal unrest. Further supporting a view of military elitism was the success of these military regimes in holding together the multi-ethnic and multi-religious groups that formed greater Burma through negotiated ceased fires with insurgent elements. That the government was able to accomplish this task while providing tangible infrastructure improvements further added to its self-confidence. With a self-perceived view of its own popularity in solving the nation's problems, the junta in 1990 experimented once again with democratic reforms. But the 1990 democratic elections exposed the military's inability to understand the popularity of a civilian ruled, democratically elected government, and also led to the most egregious display of military authoritarianism seen since independence.

The 1990 election results represented a landslide victory for the main opposition party, the National League for Democracy (NLD). Faced with a rebuke of its leadership and the fear of a subordinating role to civilian administrators, the military nullified the election results and cracked down on the main political party and many of its senior party leaders.[5] These arrests included NLD General Secretary, and Nobel laureate, Aung San Suu Kyi; Vice Chairman, U Tin Oo; and Chairman of the Shan State Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD), Hkun Htun Oo. Since these actions, the SPDC has attempted to achieve democratic reform. But with every attempt at doing so, whether through the National Convention established to rewrite a constitution, or through subsequent release of political prisoners, the regime's actions have been influenced by the fear of reform occurring too rapidly and too unpredictably.[6]

The junta's rejection of the 1990 election results led to international outcry and the imposition of sanctions against the Government of Burma (GOB) by the United States, United Kingdom, and Japan. Following the breakdown in the political process in 1997 associated with redrafting a new constitution, as well as by the continued government harassment of political dissidents, the U.S, invoked further economic sanctions which included a substantial curtailment of support provided by non-governmental organizations.[7] Additional sanctions followed in 2002 and 2003 after multiple arrests of Aung San Suu Kyi.[8] Following mounting evidence of the SPDC's religious and political repression, human rights violations, forced labor, trafficking in

people, and failure to eliminate a robust illicit drug trade the U.S. Department of State in September 2004 categorized Burma as a,"Country of Particular Concern."[9]

However, despite subsequent and qualified endorsement of the military-ruled government by most of Burma's ethnic entities involved in the continuing constitutional process, political change and warming diplomatic relations have proven ephemeral.[10] Citing corruption and a failure to adhere to "national aspirations," Army Senior General Than Shwe successfully seized power as Commander-in-Chief in an October 2004 coup that resulted in the arrests of most of the previous leadership. The new leadership's effort to consolidate its power since the coup has directly led to stymied negotiations through the National Convention.[11] As a result, the government has failed to reconvene the National Convention as was scheduled to occur May 17, 2005, and has further isolated Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo with indefinite house arrest.

Some supporters of continued sanctions policies argue that, while not completely effective in influencing political change in the country, these policies do still serve a purpose. They suggest that sanctions represent only one part of the equation that, coupled with diplomacy, will ultimately lead to a return to constitutional negotiations.[12] Sanctions opponents, however, point to the lack of recent discussions as a fallout from Burma's own recent internal strife while stating that the historical use of sanctions succeeds only in damaging U.S. long term interests.

But the real conflict between policymakers set on the use of sanctions to effect democratic change and those viewing sanctions as a useless foreign policy tool represents a deeper divide, one which revolves around the significance of Burma as it relates to U.S. strategic interests in Asia. While seemingly insignificant compared to its more economically, politically, and militarily powerful neighbors, Burma's geographic location makes it critically important to U.S.-Asian strategists. This importance stems from the proximity to the rising economic and military powers of China and India, the growing trade and financial influence of Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, and the increased emphasis on regional maritime security. The relatively stagnant U.S. policy toward Burma represents an important strategic void that needs to be addressed.

Comments by Admiral William J. Fallon, Commander, United States Pacific Command (PACOM), are indicative of this strategic void vis-à-vis Burma. In testimony during which he proclaimed that the Asia-Pacific region was rapidly becoming, "…the global community's 'center of gravity'", he discussed the importance of every country in the PACOM area of responsibility, with one exception.[13] His omission of Burma represents the lack of a congruent U.S. policy aimed at promoting democratic and human rights changes. This void in acknowledging Burma's geopolitical importance, while perhaps desired by those seeking to use isolation as a policy tool, has succeeded only in minimizing U.S. efforts to achieve substantive change.

Of equal importance for U.S. policymakers, Burma also stands out as a regional lynch pin in ongoing challenges associated with transnational crime, the illicit drug trade, illegal immigration, piracy, weapons proliferation, and the potential safe haven for non-state actors. In short, both because of these concerns and the importance of its geopolitical location, Burma is a country that cannot be ignored if successful implementation of U.S. national security strategy is to occur. The challenge and frustration for U.S. policymakers, therefore, is how to successfully implement the correct national policy towards the GOB that achieves the idealistic goals of democratic reform while supporting the more realistic demands benefiting U.S. long term strategic interests. As stated by a senior diplomat, "The currents of change, spawned by the post–Cold War world and globalization and gestated by the war on terrorism, have been flowing in varying directions. This presents new threats and opportunities for U.S. foreign policy."[14] It is the response to these "new threats and opportunities" that makes rethinking U.S. policy towards Burma not just an option, but a necessity.

Staying the Course

> A milk and water righteousness unbacked by force is to the full as wicked as and even more mischievous than force divorced from righteousness. –Theodore Roosevelt [15]

Current U.S. sanctions policy levied towards Burma stems from the latter's history of failed democratic reforms and human rights abuses. Maintaining this strategic policy fulfills the idealistic mandate as stated in the United States National Security Strategy calling on the U.S. to, "…encourage the rule of law, human rights, and meaningful economic and political participation."[16] From a pragmatic perspective, however, this policy has resulted in no tangible commitment on the part of the Burmese government to effect democratic and social change. Instead, what has been observed is a strengthening of economic power and influence by Burma's regional trading partners at U.S. expense.

The cause of this strategic failure stems from the unilateral nature of these sanctions. In effect, by "going it alone", the United States has regrettably removed itself from the engagement process. What has occurred has been greater involvement with Burma by countries enjoying the opportunities permitted by this lack of U.S. engagement. This involvement has included increased trade and investment by the People's Republic of China (PRC) and India; substantial financial investment from Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore; and rising tourism from many countries of the European Union (EU).

Sharing a common border with the People's Republic of China, Burma is a critical outlet for trade originating from Yunan province as well as for the export of Burmese natural resources

from northern Kachin and Shan states. Realizing the importance of the Yunan-Kachin/Shan corridor and the Burmese market, the Chinese have supported the infrastructure upgrades which are the pride of the SPDC.[17] The EU, too, has served to further undermine U.S. sanctions policies with the 2004 relaxation of import barriers on Burmese produced garments.[18] As a result of this action, the Burmese garment industry has nearly recovered to pre-2003 levels when U.S. import sanctions were adopted in response to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) findings of continued forced labor.[19]

Increasing trade with India (Burmese beans and pulses for much-needed steel reinforced bars (REBAR)) has also contributed to marginalization of sanctions efforts. Meanwhile, continued economic engagement policies and financial support by Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore have negated financial limits enacted by the U.S in 2003. While one can argue about the ethics behind the use of sanctions in influencing internal and political change, what is evident is the ease with which third party countries can undermine the strengths of any unilateral sanctions policies.[20]

The continued argument over the value of future U.S. sanctions has polarized all participants in the matter. The non-profit policy research group, International Crisis Group, has unequivocally stated that the easing of current sanctions policies can only occur *after* the freeing of dissident leader Aung San Suu Kyi and implementation of political reform leading to a pro-democratic constitution and government.[21] It is this position that has been taken by the United States, as well. As stated in October 2005 Congressional testimony submitted by the Department of State, U.S. objectives remain:

> …the immediate and unconditional release of Aung San Suu Kyi, U Tin Oo, Hkun Htun Oo and all political prisoners; the re-opening of all NLD party offices; and the start of a meaningful dialogue leading to genuine national reconciliation and the establishment of democracy.[22]

But with no new ideas for attempting to effect change in the country; with a U.S. military option having no strategic benefit; and with unilateral sanctions policies resulting in profiteering and enhanced influence by many third party countries at the expense of U.S. trade, investment and engagement, this idealistic approach to Burma appears untenable. President Theodore Roosevelt, in his previous statement would agree that the diplomatic idealist fails without the threat of armed coercion. As stated by one analyst:

> But there are more reasons to conclude that it is neither desirable nor practical to make democracy's promotion the dominant feature of American foreign policy. The bottom line is that while the nature of other societies should always be a foreign policy consideration, it cannot and should not always be the foreign policy priority.[23]

The policy of isolation is further challenged in today's global environment. Additional evidence abounds pointing to the need to develop a new policy. This evidence includes the Burmese regime's failure to suppress, and perhaps even tacit support, for the flow of methamphetamines and heroin to both neighboring countries and those in the region; the robustness of human smuggling activities; money laundering that potentially supports transnational terror; and the possible establishment and funding of terrorist support camps in the Rakhine-Bangladesh border. Finally, the lack of an engagement policy with Burma has prevented constructive efforts aimed at enhancing maritime security in the Andaman Sea which represents a key domain for the flow of illicit drugs, illegal weapons, piracy, and alien smuggling.[24] It is for these reasons, as well, that "staying the course" does not represent a rational U.S. foreign policy alternative.

Seeking a Multilateral Response

> More and more, the increasing interdependence and complexity of international political and economic relations render it incumbent on all civilized and orderly powers to insist on the proper policing of the world. -Theodore Roosevelt [25]

Roosevelt's comments were made in reference to a newly developed U.S. security strategy that incorporated active intervention in foreign affairs. While much of Roosevelt's strategy consisted of this unilateral "muscular diplomacy," the implementation of a similar policy directed towards Burma remains implausible in today's interrelated international atmosphere.[26] An alternative policy, however, of collective multilateral pressure holds forth greater potential for success. For the very reasons that a unilateral approach to effecting change has remained unsuccessful, a multilateral one would result in pressure on the regime from a number of directions. Achieving this goal would likely require engagement through forums such as the United Nations, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), or a conglomeration of interested countries with similar motivations for seeking change.

The shortcomings of a successful multilateral approach are well documented as exampled by the European Union's efforts; in conjunction with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); to facilitate suspension of Iran's nuclear enrichment program.[27] With Iran's declaration on January 9, 2006 of a resumption of fuel processing, the use of multi-lateral diplomatic and economic incentives appears to have reached its nadir. The stalemate related to six-party talks regarding North Korea's nuclear weapons program also point to the limited benefits of a coordinated multilateral effort.

However, the realities associated with obtaining consensus in the international arena vis-à-vis Burma make this option even more problematic. The desire to influence change through a

sanctions policy specifically directed at pursuing democratic reforms is challenged by the degree to which participating countries would desire either those reforms or a change in the economic relationship with Burma. Evidence of disinterest in a multilateral approach can be viewed by the minimal degree of emphasis either democratic reform or the release of Aung San Suu Kyi has presently engendered in the United Nations.

ASEAN, too, has shown a reluctance to exert direct pressure on the SPDC. This was recently evidenced by the subtle, quiet discourse between the regime and individual ASEAN members regarding Burma's scheduled 2006 ascendancy to the Chairmanship of the association. Sensitive to the potential fallout due to ASEAN's undisputed rule prohibiting any member to criticize any other member state, the junta is purported to have manipulated the May 7, 2005 bombings in Rangoon to justify deferral of the chairmanship. This maneuvering reveals both a sensitivity of the regime to regional criticism, and the "Asian" way of mitigating what would otherwise have represented a challenge to ASEAN's credibility as a collective entity.

The suggestion that the United Nations represents a forum for encouraging change is equally unfounded. Explanation for an apparent reluctance in pursuing sanctions through the U.N. can be attributed in part to Article 2 of the United Nations Charter that states:

> Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state….[28]

Further complicating successful pursuit of a UN-authorized sanctions policy is that such a policy would in all probability require approval of the UN Security Council which, "…may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions…" [29] With the economic interests of China at stake, the likelihood of such sanctions being implemented through the Security Council remains problematic.[30] Even multilateral efforts through the European Union (visa restrictions) have failed as a result of a fragmented position on the effectiveness of sanctions as a diplomatic tool. Realists would once again point to these responses as evidence of the pull national interests have in defeating a multilateral agenda. According to one critic of multilateral attempts to influence democratic change, "The United States simply cannot afford to allow promoting democracy to trump cooperation on what is truly essential." [31]

Modifying Current U.S. Policy

> Tragically, the configuration of power and interests inside Myanmar is not conducive to major, immediate change—and the international community has no "magic bullets" no realistic policy options that might alter this. What are needed

> instead are efforts over the longer term to change political, social, and economic realities in ways that facilitate domestic pressure and capacity for reform.[32]

To establish a framework for successful resolution, U.S. strategic policymakers must take a more pragmatic view in dealing with the Burmese regime, one that supports the use of "constructive engagement." Through the reframing of American national security policies that incorporate this form of engagement, new opportunities can be created that would lead to the development of future U.S.-Burmese reconciliation. Constructive engagement, through activities by the Department of Defense and the Department of State's United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is an option that should be employed. Similar to U.S. constructive engagement pursued in Pakistan and Indonesia, which has consisted of diplomatic efforts, information exchanges, military cooperation, and economic support, this approach has the ability to influence change at many levels of Burmese society.

Some experts on national security strategy would argue that lifting sanctions abrogates American strategic power.[33] But the present stalemate between U.S and Burmese decision makers stems directly from the fact that the current strategy does not allow for positive engagement.[34] With the Burmese leadership listing one of its six guiding principles as, "Participation by the Defence Services in a national political leadership role in the future," current U.S. strategic goals requiring elimination of the military regime are unrealistic.[35] This situation will continue until policymakers on both sides can reach accommodation through suggested constructive engagement.

This modification of current sanctions policies faces some substantial political resistance. But in today's changing strategic environment, it provides the United Sates with an opportunity to develop a relationship that best achieves tangible results corresponding to objectives outlined in the United States National Security Strategy. Pundits would argue that to "give in" to the Burmese military dictatorship would represent the worst of possible scenarios. It would reward the regime for its human rights abuses and the jailing of a democratically elected icon, Aung San Suu Kyi. It would also legitimize military rule by signaling the regime's victory over "foreign interventionists."[36]

Realistically, however, this policy option represents the best alternative for effecting change in Burma. The realists would argue that, by using moderation and patience, a U.S. policy of constructive engagement would lower the current level of distrust held by both governments. Reprioritizing, and minimizing, regime change as a national strategy would go far to achieving this goal while reducing mutually held suspicions. As stated by those knowledgeable in the art of negotiation, "Knowing the other side personally really does help. It

is much easier to attribute diabolical intentions to an unknown abstraction called the 'other side' than to someone you know personally."[37]

Recommendations

Current U.S sanctions policy requires adjustments if it is to achieve success in Burma. The U.S. National Security Strategy seeks the development of democratic governments, but pragmatic policy considerations must accept that such change requires patient encouragement through "constructive engagement." Without endorsement at the multilateral level, the role of sanctions obviates any successful outcome. It is therefore important for the United States to minimize its emphasis on democratic reform in Burma. Additionally, a new policy of graduated, constructive engagement, including the use of military support and training along with support through USAID, will increase the level of understanding between governments. Finally, as evidenced where a similar strategy is being conducted, this type of engagement will allow U.S. influence to reach many levels of Burmese society.[38] It therefore stands that this pragmatic approach represents a viable alternative that would best provide both a realistic method for affecting change within Burma, and the potential to best support idealistic efforts towards future democratic change.

Effectively initiating a policy of constructive engagement will require patience, and the development of a plan for implementation that maximizes this effort's positive effects for both the United States and Burma. In order to achieve these results, a more complete understanding of the make-up of Burmese governmental control must exist to include the current framework for constitutional reform. Equally important is the ability for policymakers to deemphasize the Burmese ex-patriot community's strong lobbying efforts and instead endorse Aung Sang Suu Kyi's willingness to work with the GOB.[39] Also of importance is acceptance of the diminished influence of the NLD on both the national and international stage.

In order to effectively influence change in Burma, U.S. policymakers must take full advantage of all the elements of national power. The recent release of National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD-44), mandates that the Secretary of State manage, "…improved coordination, planning, and implementation for reconstruction and stabilization assistance for foreign states and regions at risk of, in, or in transition from conflict or civil strife."[40] Under the auspices of this Presidential Directive, the Department of State will become the supported agency in managing this constructive engagement strategy while the Department of Defense and USAID will provide a supporting role. This will have a dual effect of enhancing relations between the GOB and DOS while optimizing the diplomatic, information, military, and economic

(DIME) elements of U.S. national strategy.[41] If the goal is to gain influence in Burma, and with it enhanced opportunities to influence peaceful transition to a more democratic government, then constructive engagement represents the means with which to make this happen.

Those knowledgeable regarding Burmese politics understand the challenges associated with initiating a new American engagement policy. Overcoming the diplomatic hurdles that are a result of current American sanctions policies is substantial even without the added degree of difficulty associated with building mutual trust and a positive communicative environment. But with time, a clear focus on policy implementation, and a commitment to engagement through these "supported" and "supporting" agencies, the outcome of these efforts can prove to be both positive and mutually beneficial.

Implementing the New Policy

A long-term pragmatic approach will be required if constructive engagement is to be achieved. The first step will be to convince U.S. policymakers that changing policy directed at Burma is in the best interests of the United States. To sway U.S. policy makers will require both the Administration's reassessment of Burma's strategic importance and a willingness to pursue a more open dialogue with the Burmese regime. The second step will require a reassessment of constructive engagement programs as they pertain to the country. This second effort will require buy-in from United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) and USAID. Equally, if not more importantly, it will require both USPACOM and USAID to better understand the regime and the relationship to its neighbors in South and Southeast Asia. Following this reassessment, USPACOM and USAID must take full advantage of their strengths in the realm of constructive engagement if these organizations are to succeed in both influencing the Burmese regime and countering the growing influence of Burma's neighbors.

A Case for Constructive Engagement

> Engagement activity includes diplomatic, economic, and military activities or operations conducted to achieve U.S. national-security objectives. Engagement requirements are situational and can change rapidly. Each engagement element provides an essential contribution to the overall engagement effort--but the various elements are not always, or necessarily, substitutes for one another. Similarly, diplomatic or economic agreements are not always or necessarily substitutes for military presence and engagement.[42]

In its many forms constructive engagement is the "means" by which the elements "ways" of national power are exercised to obtain desired regional affects "ends." These ends can be political (human rights improvement, democratic change), informational, military (training,

equipping), or economic, while the means of achieving them range from International Military Education and Training (IMET) and Foreign Military Sales (FMS) to investments in infrastructure improvements and HIV/AIDS training and education.

Critics may argue that more robust constructive engagement with Burma defeats the "ends" of political change and improved human rights. While the direct correlation between constructive engagement and U.S. national strategy aspirations is a difficult line to follow, there is historical precedence, which represents the strength of the former both in influencing democratically-challenged governments and in enhancing U.S. regional capabilities and influence. Policy implementation in Pakistan and Indonesia offers excellent examples of the benefits derived through the use of this constructive engagement.

Pakistan

Constructive engagement in Pakistan has undergone a series of peaks and valleys as a result of its ever-changing priority with U.S. policymakers. The peaks have been attributable to policy decisions affected by the need to offset India's pro-Soviet leanings, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The valleys have been associated with warming U.S-India relations, the seizing of power by the military, and nuclear testing.[43] All of these policy shifts, though, have represented more of a short term decision than one representing the long term interests of the United States.

Associated with these shifting policy decisions has been successful implementation of Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) measures. A prime example of the resurgence in this form of constructive engagement can be observed following Pakistan's support in GWOT. Due to Pakistan's support in this effort, the United States has been able to enhance regional security cooperation through a number of institutions. TSC, through United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) has enabled the Pakistani Navy to support coalition Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO). In addition, TSCP has included a $1.2 billion Foreign Military Sales (FMS) agreement that permitted purchase of a P-3C aircraft. International Military Education and Training (IMET) funding has also been provided to the Pakistan government resulting in a strengthening of military-to-military relationships at the senior leadership level.[44]

But constructive engagement has not been restricted to military means only. Engagement through USAID has also been part of the U.S. effort. This effort has included support to the Pakistani Ministry of Education, with concentration of efforts on reform of the educational system as well as training of educators. Currently, the Department of State sponsored agency is into the third year of a five year program with the Ministry and involves efforts ranging from

policy and planning to adult and youth literacy programs. The training of educators in the United States as well as the promotion of democracy amongst this same group also represents part of this program.[45]

The success of this program demonstrates that a long term commitment in combating terrorism while supporting Pakistan's social, political, and economic development is in America's national strategic interests. Equally important, this strategy stands a better chance of success than would a short sighted policy of sanctions as a method of forcing democratic reform. As suggested by Mr. Touqir Hussain, former Pakistani ambassador to Japan, Spain and Brazil, the success of U.S. constructive engagement is dependent on these unimpaired long term political considerations.[46] While democratic reforms are important, they should be weighed against the greater emphasis on GWOT and the maintenance of U.S. regional influence. As if intentionally providing a comparison between his country and Burma, Mr. Hussain commented that, "Future U.S. interests in the region may be defined…by the looming strategic shadow of a resurgent China…[which] is already positioning itself to fill any future power vacuum caused by any receding U.S. standing in the region…"[47]

Indonesia

Indonesia provides further evidence suggesting that constructive engagement represents the best long term tool for supporting U.S. national security. As with the use of this tool in Pakistan, it is apparent that the need to engage with countries facing substantial institutional challenges in the face of stiff internal strife is not without precedence. Those arguing for continuation of current policies directed at Burma would highlight the dissimilarities between these two countries. Most notable of these differences would be Indonesia's 2004 democratically-held national and local elections. But when comparing Burma and Indonesia's development challenges, regional security issues, and the realization of the greater importance a pragmatic approach to constructive engagement illustrates in terms of U.S national security, the similarities outweigh these differences.

Indonesia's recent change in stature has resulted in U.S. support both through United States Pacific Command's (USPACOM) TSC and USAID. In April 2005 the Department of State announced restoration of full IMET and Expanded-IMET (E-IMET) funding totaling $600,000. This funding will support local Mobile Education Teams, Masters Programs at U.S. Military Post-graduate schools, and Counter-Terrorism Fellowship Programs at the National Defense University. Additional TSCP support includes almost one million dollars in Foreign Military Sales (FMS) funds for C-130 and fighter aircraft repairs. Although this FMS is restricted

to “safety of use/non-lethal” items (including propellant cartridges for ejection seats), it represents a dramatic departure from FY2004 when the Indonesian government was prohibited from taking advantage of these TSC programs.[48] As stated by U.S. Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, “IMET for Indonesia is in the U.S. interest.”[49]

USAID support to Indonesia has been ongoing since before the 1997 Southeast Asian economic crisis. More recently, however, funding in FY2006 has been increased in conjunction with the post-election warming of relations. Current funding through USAID totals over eight million dollars and is being used to support educational assistance and reform, democratic development, and economic growth, as well as energy and water sector reform. Additional funding directed towards alternative farming, prevention of human trafficking, and cyber crime provides further proof of the strength of constructive engagement in enhancing U.S. security.[50] As stated by the Mr. Andrew S. Natsios, Director, USAID, this engagement tool, “…reflects USAID’s multiple goals in development, relief and recovery and in advancing U.S. national security.”[51]

Conclusion

Grand Strategy as defined by the U.S. Army War College consists of:

> The use of all U.S. elements of national power in peace and war to support a strategic vision of America’s role in the world that will best achieve the nation’s core grand strategic objectives.[52]

Today’s national security strategy has undergone yet another change in the post-Cold War, post-9/11 security environment. This environment has been affected by the rate at which change in the global environment is occurring along with the fear this change engenders in a world where half of its population lives below the poverty line. To achieve agreement in the international environment now requires greater engagement between governments. As it pertains to nations seeking agreement at the strategic level, reaching agreement consists of overcoming, “Ideological differences, cultural misperceptions, and the bitter nature of…mutual suspicion and hostility…”[53]

Citing current national security perspectives vis-à-vis the United States and Burma, this paper has described concepts and principles needed to effect successful engagement. It has critiqued current policies to include political and economic sanctions which have unarguably fallen short of their desired goals . Although these policies were designed in response to an idealistic desire to create democratic change in an autocratic regime, and to influence improvements in human rights, the reality is that they have had an entirely opposite effect. Making matters worse, U.S. sanctions policies have forced the Burmese government to pursue

closer relations with some countries unsupportive of the desired end state of political reform and enhanced human rights.

Seeking change in the nature of Burma's government through a multilateral approach has been discussed. Although this choice represents perhaps the best of desired options, the inability and reluctance of governments to achieve consensus directed at Burma points to the political and economic interests driving each nation's national policies. Substantiating the international community's reticence towards forcing the democratization of a "legitimate" government, this paper has pointed to the lack of action taken against Burma by both the United Nations and through ASEAN.

To establish a framework for successful engagement, U.S. policymakers must take a more pragmatic view in dealing with the Burmese regime. Through the reframing of American national security desires towards Burma, new avenues for influencing change can be created that would lead to a sounder, more productive relationship. The recommendation to use a constructive military and non-military engagement strategy in reshaping this policy represents an effective means of enhancing U.S. national security. If building trust between governments remains an essential premise behind U.S. security strategy, then an opportunity for engagement between the Burmese leadership and U.S. government ultimately represents an avenue leading to a future reconciliation and enhanced regional stability.

Endnotes

[1] George W. Bush, *A National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, September 2002), 3.

[2] "America will stand with the allies of freedom to support democratic movements in the Middle East and beyond, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.

"The United States has no right, no desire, and no intention to impose our form of government on anyone else. That is one of the main differences between us and our enemies. They seek to impose and expand an empire of oppression, in which a tiny group of brutal, self-appointed rulers control every aspect of every life. Our aim is to build and preserve a community of free and independent nations, with governments that answer to their citizens, and reflect their own cultures. And because democracies respect their own people and their neighbors, the advance of freedom will lead to peace.

"That advance has great momentum in our time -- shown by women voting in Afghanistan, and Palestinians choosing a new direction, and the people of Ukraine asserting their democratic rights and electing a president. We are witnessing landmark events in the history of liberty. And in the coming years, we will add to that story." President George W. Bush, *State of the Union 2005* Speech, February 2, 2005; available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/02/20050202-11.html; Internet; accessed 6 January 2006.

[3] George W. Bush, *A National Security Strategy of the United States of America* , 17.

[4] Central Intelligence Agency, "World Factbook: Burma" (Central Intelligence Agency, 2004), available from http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/bm.html; Internet; accessed 19 October 2005.

[5.] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] International Crisis Group, *Myanmar: Sanctions, Engagement, or Another Way Forward?* (Yangon, Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2004), 17

[8] Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs statement to Congress, October 11, 2005, "Conditions in Burma and U.S. Policy Toward Burma for the Period March 28-September 27, 2005, available at: http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rpt/56905.html; Internet; accessed January 8, 2006. Diplomatic functions by accredited military attaches and annual operations by Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA), through Pacific Command, are still permitted by DOD entities. The latter organization continues to conduct World War II remains recovery in the Kachin state. Kachin state, one of seven states comprising Burma, is located in northern Burma.

[9] Ibid.

[10] John H. Badgley, "Strategic Interests in Myanmar", in *Reconciling Burma/Myanmar: Essays on U.S. Relations with Burma*, National Bureau of Asian Research, vol.15, no. 1 (March 2004), 15.

[11] Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs statement to Congress. On August 27, 2003, the then-Prime Minister, LtGen. Khin Nyunt announced a seven step plan for "principled democracy. Commonly referred to as the 'roadmap' this plan calls for:

"(1) Reconvening of the National Convention that has been adjourned since 1996; (2) After the successful holding of the National Convention, step by step implementation of the process necessary for the emergence of a genuine and disciplined democratic system; (3) Drafting of a new constitution in accordance with basic principles and detailed basic principles laid down by the National Convention; (4) Adoption of the constitution through national referendum; (5) Holding of free and fair election for Pyithu Hluttaws (Legislative bodies) according to the new constitution; (6) Convening of Hluttaws attended by Hluttaw members in accordance with the new constitution; (7) Building a modern, developed and democratic nation by the state leaders elected by the Hluttaw; and the government and other central organs formed by the Hlluttaw." International Crisis Group. 5.

[12] Source: Ministry of National Planning, Burma, in "The European Union and Burma: The Case for Targeted Sanctions," (Burma Campaign UK, 2004), 19.

[13] Admiral William J. Fallon at U.S. Senate, Senate Armed Services Committee, *U.S. Pacific Command Posture: Hearings Before the Senate Armed Services Committee* , 109th Cong., 8 March 2005, available at: http://armed-services.senate.gov/ 19 December 2005; Internet; accessed on 13 January 2006.

[14] Tauqir Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement: The War on Terrorism and Beyond* (United States Institute of Peace, Special Report 145; August, 2005), available at http://www.usip.org/fellows/reports ; Internet; accessed on 18 December 2005.

[15] Roosevelt letter to Hugo Munsterberg, October 3, 1914, in *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, Elting E. Morison, ed., (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), vol. VIII, 824-5; quoted in Henry A. Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 40.

[16] Richard N. Haass, "Freedom is Not a Doctrine; Promoting Democracy is the Wrong Priority for Foreign Policy", available at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A31593-2005Jan23.html; Internet; accessed 19 December 2005. A15.

[17] This trade connection has not only served to establish a strong relationship between the two governments, but has helped undermine the potential negative impact of U.S. sanctions. Evidence of this is seen in statistics released by the Myanmar Ministry of Commerce which cited the 2004 value of trade between the two countries reaching an historically high $1.15 billion or approximately 15.1 percent of Myanmar's total foreign trade. "Myanmar Expects More Investment From China: UMCCI Chairman", Asean News Network, (October 23, 2005); available at http://www.AseanNewsNetwork.com ; Internet; accessed 14 October 2005.

[18] Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs statement to Congress.

[19] Even before the relaxation of these sanctions, trade between Burma and the EU had shown steady and marked growth. According to statistics, Actual Foreign Investment (AFI) by the EU in Burma for 2000/1, stood at roughly $200 milion or approximately 10,000 percent more than the amount invested in the country in 1994/5. Ministry of National Planning, Burma ,14.

[20] Report findings stated that, "The attempt by the United States to impact on the economic interests of the regime and its constituency has been reduced by the inaction of the EU, Asian states and the UN. There are no EU measures that effectively challenge the economic interest of Burma's military establishment." Ministry of National Planning. 5.

[21] International Crisis Group, iii.

[22] Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs statement to Congress.

[23] Haass, A15

[24] Fallon.

[25]Roosevelt statement to Congress, 1902, quoted in John Morton Blum, *The Republican Roosevelt* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 127. Quoted in Kissinger, 39.

[26] Kissinger, 39.

[27] Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations & European Neighborhood Policy, "Statement on Recent Declarations by the President of Iran", 16 November 2005 ,SPEECH/05/696, available from http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/news/ferrero/2005/sp05_696.htm ; Internet; accessed 01 December 2005.

[28] Charter of the United Nations, available at http://www.un.org; Internet; accessed 19 December 2005.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Russia's willingness to endorse sanctions through the U.N. Security Council is also problematic. The Federation has supplied the Burmese military with Russian weapons systems (including 10 Mig-29's) to the Burmese through a barter agreement. Consequently, the likelihood of the Federation supporting sanctions will face the same challenges as sanctions directed towards Iran's resumption of nuclear research in January, 2006. "Russia Seals Deal With Myanmar", WorldNetDaily, (May 17, 2002); available at: http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp; Internet; accessed 1 February 2006.

[31] Haass, A15.

[32] Badgley, et al., "Executive Overview", *Reconciling Burma/Myanmar: Essays on U.S. Relations with Burma*, pp 9-10.

[33] Elliot Abrams, "Words or War: Why Sanctions Are Necessary"; available at: http://www.usaengage.org/archives/resources/difperspectives/Abrams_kittredge.html; Internet, accessed 6 Oct 2005.

[34] International Crisis Group,19.

[35] "The National Convention", *The Irrawaddy Online Edition,* (31 March 2004); available at: http://www.irrawaddy.org; Internet; accessed 17 October 2005.

[36] The national goal is, "…to prevent, through national solidarity, the danger of internal and external destructive elements undermining peace and stability of the State and nation."--pronounced as national goal in the 57th Annual Union Day Objectives, 11 February, 2004, available at: http://www.irrawaddy.org; Internet; accessed 17 October 2005.

[37] Roger Fisher and William Ury, *Getting to Yes*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 19.

[38] Fallon

[39] International Crisis Group, 7.

[40] George W. Bush, *National Security Presidential Directive, NSPD-44: Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization,* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, December 7, 2005).

[41] The elements of national power as applied to Burma include political, military, economic, societal, intelligence, and infrastructure (PMESII).

[42] John G. Kinney and Gordon I. Peterson, "The Size of the Fleet Really Does Matter!" (Navy League of the United States, September 1999), available at: http://www.navyleague.org/seapower/us_engagement_strategy.htm; Internet; accessed 6 January 2006.

[43] Hussain

[44] Ibid.

[45] James Kunder, Assistant, Administrator for Asia and the Near East, U.S. Agency for International Development, Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, United States Senate Washington, D.C., March 2, 2005 available at: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/cbj2006/ane/pk.html; Internet; accessed 14 January 2006.

[46] Hussain.

[47] Ibid.

[48] David Isenberg, *US Back in Step with Indonesia,* Asia Times Online, March 3, 2005; available at http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/GC03Ae01.html; accessed December 18, 2005.

[49] Condoleezza Rice, quoted in David Isenberg.

[50] Andrew S. Natsios, Director, USAID, *USAID Congressional Budget Justification, FY2006: Indonesia* (updated June 14, 2005), available at: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/cbj2006/ane/id.html; Internet; accessed January 12, 2006.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Department of National Security and Strategy, Course Directive, *National Security Policy and Strategy* (U.S. Army War College: Carlisle, PA, October 2005), 13.

[53] Donald W. Boose, Jr., “The Korean War Truce Talks: A Study in Conflict Termination” in *Parameters,* vol. XXX, No. 1, (Spring 2004) 106.